DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 053 061 SP 004 962

TITLE	Program Development Project in International Teacher Education.
INSTITUTION	Towson State Coll., Md.
PUB DATE	71
NOTE	15p.; 1971 AACTE Distinguished Achievement Award entry
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Early Childhood Education, Field Studies, *International Programs, Preschool Teachers, Preservice Education, *Program Development, Student Exchange Programs, *Study Abroad, *Teacher Education, Teacher Exchange Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Australia, England, Israel, Mexico

ABSTRACT

In the past two years, the Department of Early Childhood Teacher Education at Towson State College has completed phases of program development in studies abroad in four countries--England, Israel, Mexico, and Australia. An essential element of the program is a strategy of progressive development. It is characterized by a preparatory phase in which faculty members tour, study, consult, or teach in a foreign country, and develop personal relationships with a variety of personnel and institutions there. These provide the basis for a second phase, the introduction of a course for students conducted in field studies within the country. Finally, the program is elaborated through the conduct of subsequent courses abroad, the arrangement of faculty and student exchanges, the development of instructional materials, and the involvement of additional faculty and disciplines, all of which constitute a third phase. The program is now in Phase III with England, Phase II with Israel, and Phase I with Mexico and Australia. No special funds have been used for the program; faculty and students travel at their own expense. (RT)

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TOWSON STATE COLLEGE

Program Development Project in International Teacher Education

Introduction

The Department of Teacher Education at Towson State College has completed phases of program development in studies abroad, which demonstrate a uniquely comprehensive set of relationships. The rich fabric of interchange and co-operative experiences herein described derives from both a strategy of progressive development and a philosophy of international education that differs from traditional models.

Few programs called "study abroad" have escaped the connotations of that phrase itself: "We are going to study them," "We are going to see." Even when more than observation experiences have been a characteristic of such program designs (Eg. the taking of courses at foreign institutions, the participation in discussion or "workshops," or other "positive" student activities) more often than not the conception of "sightseer's itinerary" has been a subtle and pervasive mind set. The student has been looking in somebody else's window.

Secondly, so many education programs, and teacher training programs in particular, have neglected the power of example and the introduction of the novice to the association of professionals pursuing knowledge in their field. Too often the apprentice has been given to imitation, or to the memorization of receipes rather than involved in an experience of the continuous pursuit of learning that is the professional life style of experts dedicated to their field. Becoming a professional may best be said to be the attaining of skills in asking questions in one's field rather than in parroting answers.

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Our programs, later described, therefore reveal concerted efforts to maintain the conception of mutual learning experiences: Our faculty, with the faculty of foreign institutions; faculty with students; students with students; and both faculty and students practitioners in the field (In this case, primary pre-school staffs here and abroad). Always the attempt is to engage them together in the pursuit of learning, in observation, participation, evaluation, and dialogue of all kinds. Always we are learning together, not observers one of the other.

Essential to such an aim has been the adoption of a strategy of development that carefully weaves a fabric of interrelationships, both personal and institutional, upon which the whole program rests and which, in fact become the program itself.

In the case of each foreign country, members of our own faculty have first studied, toured, consulted, and taught there in the subject of emphasis which is their own specialty. While doing so, they established strong relationships with institutions and personnel who were associated with the specialty in that country and developed mutual interests with them in the possibilities of future exchanges.

Next, they have arranged through these contacts an itinerary of learning experiences for a selected group of students in our professional training program to undertake abroad. They then accompanied them in college credited study venture and led them to its completion and evaluation. Subjective instruments were used so as to provide basis for the development of more objective measures in phase III.

In a third phase (in the following school year) they then arranged visitations of the foreign faculty to our campus to lecture, demonstrate, or lead workshops;

expanded the program for additional student trips abroad for the following summer; arranged for our own faculty to teach in the program abroad; set up arrangements for other faculty on our staff or those of other departments with related interests to join in the experiences of the program; and undertook the development of more objective evaluative instruments for the program. These should be called elaborations of the program, rather than expansion of it, since they are more than quantitative additions.

In the field of Early Childhood Education, we have presently reached Phase III with England and Phase II with Israel. With Mexico and Australia we have begun Phase I. We have tried to describe them separately by country to emphasize the common pattern of development that has transpired in each case. We believe this technique of careful evolution is a striking feature of ourprogram and an essential requirement for its value and continued success.

However, we want to emphasize that we do not conceive of isolated programs, by country, standing apart from each other. We are not studying countries per se. We want to totally integrate efforts to enhance the development of professionals for Early Childhood Education. You will see that we have tried in a number of ways to weave together faculty and student experiences from the various countries. Not even the term "comparative education" is sufficient to convey our intention to avoid the additive character of collating separate elements. Our aim has been to involve all participants, here and abroad, in mutual learning experiences in the pursuit of knowledge and the common problems of mind and man.

ENGLAND

Phase I (Preparatory) Faculty Studies Abroad

Phase II (Introductory) Summer Classes in England

Phase III (Developmental) Elaborations of the Program

Phase I (Preparatory) Faculty Studies Abroad

In the summer of 1964, Mrs. E. Karfgin, a member of the Early Childhood Education Faculty traveled in seven countries in Europe including England.

In the spring of 1966 Miss E. Branblett, another Early Childhood Education faculty member, spent three months studying programs for young children in England and observing in Nursery and Infant Schools in London, Bristol, Hampshire and Wiltshire. She visited the College of St. Matthias in Bristol studying their teacher training program.

The World Organization for Early Childhood Education (Organisatien Mondiale Pour l' Educatien Prescolaire) held its' International Conference in Paris in the summer of 1966. This afforded her further contact with educators from England.

In August Mrs. Karfgin and Miss Branblett attended the International School at New College Oxford England, which was sponsored by the Nursery School Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The theme of this conference was Developments in Primary Education.

This provided an opportunity for the two members of Towson State College to be closely associated with the leaders of this conference and, through in-depth conversations, marathon exchanges and living experiences, to become intimately aware that we shared with these colleagues in the profession similar philosophies concerning the education of young children.

Miss Eileen Argyles, a faculty member of the College of St. Matthias, was then invited to visit our campus.

She was in residence for two weeks during our summer session lecturing classes and sharing ideas with many members of our faculty. We explored the idea of student exchanges between the College of St. Matthias and Towson State College with her during that period.

As a member of the Nursery School Association of Great Britain, Mrs. Karfgin returned to England in the summer of 1968 to attend the 28th Annual Summer School at Digby Steuart College of Education in London. The theme of this conference was Scientific Thinking and Creative Activities of Young Children. Concurrently Miss Bramblett was attending an International Conference in Children's Literature at Loughborough College in London. During these conferences the idea of having students from Towson State College share similar experiences in England was further developed.

Contacts were established with outstanding educators in England to participate in Phase II of our program: A three week field study tour for Towson State College in the summer 1969.

Phase II: Summer Classes in England, 1970

Towson State College developed a course entitled, "Travel Study Abroad: Early Childhood Education," carrying three semester hours graduate or undergraduate credit, designed for Early Childhood Education people and all concerned with the young child.

Participants had an opportunity to become acquainted with significant concepts and practices in the field of Early Childhood Education in three English cities: London, Bristol and Oxford. Cultural background sightseeing throughout the cities focussed on a clear understanding of the history and present-day social structure of the country.

Our schedule in London took us to the University of London, Institute of Education, for lectures by the dean, Dr. W. D. Wall, and Miss D. M. Gardner, former director of the Department of Child Development, as well as workshops. There we also visited schools and "Adventure Playgrounds," including the recently-opened one for handicapped children.

In Bristol, the enrollees visited the College of St. Matthias, attended lectures, visited nursery schools, infant schools, playgroups, and playgrounds, and consulted with the professionals operating them.

In Oxford we attended a lecture and made study visits to special schools, day care programs, and playgrounds, and toured the University.

Our students lived in private homes for the entire week's visit in order to have an opportunity to absorb the culture, to study family life, and to form new friendships with the English people.

Informal analysis and evaluation of the experiences were continuous, in concert with students, accompanying faculty, and English professionals involved. Formal papers were written as summary evaluations of the completed course, providing a foundation for the development of Phase III and more objective measures.

Phase III (Developmental): Elaborations of the Program

Since the completion of Phase II in the summer of 1970, we have developed new instructional materials for our program; taught other classes, departments, and institutions about what we have learned; negotiated future student and faculty exchanges; constructed plans for the next study tours abroad in summer 1971; and begun development of more effective evaluation instruments.

With permission from our English guest lecturers, audio tapes were made of all lectures in our study abroad last summer, and these have been dubbed for instructional use or individualized study in our ECE programs, and for orientations to be given our future foreign study groups. (Samples accompany this report: (1) Dr. W. D. Wall, dean of the University of London, "Children's Thinking;" (2) Miss Briggs, Nursery School Director, College of St. Matthias, "Early Childhood Education Program at St. Matthias;" (3) Dr. G. M. Pacey, Head of the Math Department, Coventry College of Education, "Mathematics for Young Children.")

Eighty color slides have been edited from those taken of the British nursery-infant schools and playgrounds, including Adventure Playgrounds for handicapped children, by Mrs. Karfgin, our Field Study Tour Director, as part of her study project in Phase II. They have been developed by her into teaching materials for our E.C.E. program. This fall she has used them in lecture presentations to several graduate and undergraduate classes at Towson State College and at the University of Maryland. (A set will be made available to the A.A.C.T.E. should they so desire; prints of some accompany this report.)

Cooperative planning is under way for student exchanges: Mr. Sefton Davis, Vice President of the College of St. Matthias, Bristol, England, is scheduled to visit our campus in April 1971 to discuss further details of exchange student programs in Early Childhood Education.

Arrangements are being completed for faculty exchanges. Plans are for Miss J. B. Bull, from England, and Miss Irma Julista Sanchez, from Mexico City, (see below) to work with E.C.E. students at Towson next summer.

Our college is moving toward a new semester calendar which may provide a "mini-semester" in January 1972. Enthusiasm has been generated for a mini-course in this interval and preliminary planning has begun with Mr. J. E. J. Frances, M.A., Bursar of the University of Oxford, Department of Educational Studies, Oxford, England.

Another summer study tour is scheduled for 1971. In keeping with our premise of total involvement and mutual learning experiences, faculty from Towson State College will not only accompany our students but will be formally committed to teach abroad as well as participate as learners.

Building upon the subjective evaluations of Phase II, we are undertaking to supplement such anal/ses with a variety of other, more objective, measures. Pilot studies have been run on the usefulness of certain standardized attitude test batteries in pre-post testing of E.C.E. students who were in teacher training courses and workshops on campus this past summer (1970). The college research center (Lida Lee Tall Learning Research Center) conducted the study and is now analyzing the data. These and other objective measures will then be evaluated for use in evaluating selected components of the international aspects of our E.C.E. program. We wish to know what specific effects these experiences produce, which of them may be improved or eliminated, what advantages study-abroad experiences have in enhancing our teacher-training programs, and to what extent certain effects may be simulated on our campus.

ISRAEL

Phase I (Preparatory): Faculty Studies Abroad

Phase II (Introductory): Summer Classes in Israel

Phase III (Developmental): Elaboration of the Program

ISRAEL

Phase I (Preparatory): Faculty Studies Abroad

Dr. Aliza Brandwine, of our Early Childhood Education faculty, former faculty member of the Seminar Hakibbutzim in Israel, was asked by colleagues in the field of Early Childhood Education to participate in a panel on collective education at the Twelfth World Assembly of O.M.E.P. (World Organization for the Education of Young Children) held in Washington, D. C. in 1968. Her presentation was subsequently developed into the article, "Upbringing of Children in Kibbutzim of Israel"(enclosed), published in Young Children in 1969. It was imbedded in the growth of interest in collectives and communal education and child centers for working or welfare mothers. The book by Dr. Bruno Bettelheim, Children of the Dream, and the search for solutions to problems of need for more comprehensive quality day care programs in the U.S. generated an even greater interest among educators and highlighted the unique system of education in the Kibbutzim.

On a consultation trip to Israel in the winter of 1969, Aliza Brandwine planned a ten-day workshop for the summer of 1970. Fully developed, it included three days of discussion with the founders of early childhood education in the Kibbutzim and key personnel, four days of visitation experiencing twenty-four hours in the typical life of two different Kibbutzim, and finally, three days of evaluation and analysis of basic concepts that could be extracted, fundamental ideas that could be transposed to meet the needs of early childhood care programs in the U.S. The program was to be based at the Teacher's Training College for the Kibbutzim and coordinated with two international

conferences held in Israel that same summer: The International Child Psychiatric Conference and the International Conference on Mental Health. Both conferences emphasized education in the Kibbutzim by devoting a full conference day to the topics. Circumstances prevented participation of a group of our students in the planned ten-day seminar in 1970. However, through the many associations established in its designing and through Dr. Brandwine's further participation in the two international conferences, groundwork was laid for Phase II, and the expansion of such a workshop offering for the summer of 1971.

Phase II (Introductory): Summer Classes in Israel

A three-week intensive summer course and lab, carrying six college credits, titled "Early Childhood Education in the Kibbutzim," is to be offered our students in teacher training in 1971. It is to be given in Israel by the founders and the top leadership of collective education in that country. Interest has been expressed by educators of the Office of Child Development, University of Maryland, Georgetown University, Hunter College, New York University, and others who may also send faculty or students to join us. Evelyn Omawake, past president of N.A.E.Y.C., who visited various children's centers in Kibbutzim, is very supportive and enthusiastic about this course.

We are now developing plans for associated courses to be taught in Israel the same summer: a comparative education course by Dr. Hauserman, Associate Dean of Teacher Education for our college, and a course in human development or child psychology by Mrs. Dorothy Siegel, Associate Professor of the Psychology Department.

Phase III (Developmental): Elaboration of the Program

Although Phase II will not be completed until the fall of 1971, we have begun work on Phase III. Two hundred color slides have been produced from previous faculty studies of life in the Kibbutz. They are being developed into two training sequences and produced as film-strips: a typical day in the life of toddlers and a typical day in the life of infants in Kibbutz Alonim. They show how surrogate mothers (childcare workers called "metaplot") perform their roles, and the relationships of parents to their children both at their own homes and in the centers.

Mrs. Miriam Rot, author, founder of Early Childhood Education in the Kibbutzim, supervisor, consultant, and senior faculty member of the Teacher's Training College for the Kibbutzim (Seminar Hakibbutzim), plans to take a sabbatical during 1971, and there is probability that arrangements can be completed for her to give a series of lectures or a semester of classes on our campus.

Mrs. Rot has given Dr. Brandwine of our faculty her consent to translate her latest book, Children's Literature, into English.

Consideration is being given to future comparative education seminars between participants of the Israel and England study abroad tours.

MEXICO AND AUSTRALIA

Phase I has begun with two other countries.

In 1970 Dr. Dell Kjer, Chairman of the Department of Early Childhood Education at Towson State College, attended the "First Pan American Seminar on Education and Welfare of Young Children," in Mexico, sponsored by O.M.E.P., and presented a paper on, "A Program for Improving the Teachers of Young Children." Plans are now being confirmed for Irma Julista Sanchez, E.C.E. educator from Mexico City, to work with our own students next summer at Towson. Through Mrs. Davilo, Director of Early Childhood Education for Mexico, the possibility for Phase II, a study tour of students and faculty, is being explored.

Negotiations are under way to bring Dr. Isla Stamp, Chief of Child Psychology, Melbourne, Australia, to Towson State College as a visiting professor for 1971-72. Her expression of interest in our program and in this type of a sabbatical gives promise of a fine addition to our program of mutual learning.

(Note: The above countries have developed with us beyond the point of mere contacts or interests. In the last year, however, we have also played host for several days to an investigative team of educators from the Netherlands Antilles and have established dialog with a prominent leader in E.C.E. for Nicaragua.)